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Visas of Indian biz execs revoked: US embassy

The US on Thursday said it has revoked and subsequently denied visas of certain Indian business executives for their alleged involvement in trafficking of fentanyl precursors. However, the US embassy did not divulge the identity of the business leaders whose visas were revoked. However, US Charge d'affaires Jorgan Andrews said individuals and organisations involved in the illegal production and trafficking of drugs to the US will face consequences. **P9**

NATO-STYLE AGREEMENT TO TREAT ATTACK ON ONE COUNTRY AS ATTACK ON BOTH India weighs Pak-Saudi def pact

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

INDIA on Thursday said it would assess the security implications of the newly signed Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement between nuclear-armed Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, amid concerns over shifting power dynamics in the Middle East and South Asia.

The pact, signed on Wednesday during Pak Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's official visit to Riyadh, marks a major upgradation of defence ties between the two countries. It includes a mutual defence clause that says "any aggression against either of the two countries shall be considered as an aggression against both".

The accord was signed in the presence of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the kingdom's de-facto ruler, and Pakistan's powerful army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, highlighting its strategic weight. The agreement, finalised days after Israeli airstrikes

IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA

- 1 India to assess the Pak-Saudi pact's impact on national security and regional stability
- 2 Future military conflicts with Pak could technically evoke a response from Saudi Arabia
- 3 India worried about nuclear proliferation as Pak is expected to provide N-cover to the Saudis

on Qatari soil targeting Hamas leaders, has the potential to reshape regional security alignments as many Gulf states are now questioning the long-term reliability of the US as a security guarantor. It also comes months after the military conflict between India and Pakistan following Pahalgaon attack.

Reacting to the development, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) offered a measured response. "We have seen reports of the signing of a strategic mutual defence pact between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

Pakistan's decades-old alliance with Saudi Arabia, home to Islam's holiest sites, is deep-rooted in shared faith, strate-



Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman after signing a pact in Riyadh | AP

gic interests, and deep economic interdependence. It also includes a longstanding military partnership. Between 1,500 and 2,000 Pakistani troops are

currently deployed in Saudi Arabia, providing operational, technical, and training support, including to the kingdom's air and land forces.

While defence cooperation between the two nations is not new, formalising it into a mutual defence pact to include the nuclear umbrella marks an escalation that is likely to trigger close scrutiny in New Delhi.

A senior Saudi official, speaking to the international media, acknowledged the complexities involved regarding India — a key Saudi partner. "Our relationship with India is more robust than it has ever been. We will continue to grow this relationship and seek to contribute to regional peace whichever way we can," the official was quoted as saying.

When asked whether Pakistan would provide Saudi Arabia with a nuclear umbrella, the official said: "This is a comprehensive defensive agreement that encompasses all military means."

Rift brewing in Cabinet over caste survey

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

WITH only a couple of days left for the state government's ambitious caste survey to begin, the Cabinet seems to be divided over the issue as a section of ministers, reportedly, opposed the inclusion of 331 new castes in the survey list, including the ones which are opposed by the

BJP. Thursday's Cabinet meeting witnessed heated arguments as some of the senior ministers raised objection over adding 331 castes (new) to the caste survey list.

Government sources said some of the ministers demanded postponement of the survey. They opposed the inclusion of 331 caste names which were not in the earlier list.

Sources said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah expressed his displeasure over the ministers' stand. The CM told the ministers that this survey is for the poor and not a caste census. The CM was visibly upset in the Cabinet. The ministers told the CM that the survey is being projected as pro-Dalit, pro-backward classes and anti-upper caste in society. **P4,5**

EXPRESS READ 2 killed after landslides, flooding hit U'khand

GOPESHWAR: Two people were killed and six feared trapped under debris as landslides and flooding triggered by heavy rain flattened over 40 houses in four villages of Chamoli district on Thursday. Four were rescued in Kuntari Lagaphali and one in Dhurma, the State Emergency Operation Centre in Dehradun said. **P10**

Fresh Rahul-CEC sparring on 'vote theft' in Karnataka

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

IN yet another exposé on 'vote theft', Congress leader **Rahul Gandhi** on Thursday claimed large-scale irregularities in Karnataka's Aland constituency, accusing Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar of 'protecting those murdering democracy'.

Rahul charged that 6,018 voter names were deleted in Aland in a systematic manner using software, adding the CEC was complicit in the deletion as he refused to provide crucial data and take any action despite repeated requests from the Karnataka CID.

However, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer in Karnataka claimed it had handed over all information required for the probe to the Superintendent of Police, Kalaburagi district on Sept 6, 2023. In Delhi, the ECI said, "No deletion of any vote can be done online by any member of the public, as misperceived by Gandhi."

The fraud was exposed by chance when a booth-level officer discovered that her uncle's vote had been deleted after a neighbour applied for the deletion of his vote, said Rahul. "However, the neighbour denied it. Some other force hijacked the process," he added.

Although the Karnataka CID sent 18 letters to ECI in a span

'No widespread deletion of voter names in Aland'

BENGALURU: The office of the CEC, Karnataka, has dismissed allegations about 6,000 voters' names being deleted in Aland Legislative Assembly constituency in Kalaburagi during the 2023 polls. The CEC-Karnataka said that only 24 of the 6,018 applications for deletion were found to be genuine, while 5,994 were found to be incorrect. **P4**



of 18 months seeking destination IPs, device ports and OTP trails of the fake Form 7 applications, the poll body has not responded so far, he alleged.

The deletions, he added, were at the top 10 booths where Congress holds strong influence and had won eight of them. Rahul said that an automated programme chose the first name from each booth to delete votes, with mobile numbers from outside the state used to file fake applications. "Someone set up a centralised criminal operation to steal elections. In Aland, this operation filed 6,018 deleted applications by impersonating voters using automated filling of online EC forms," he said.

Suryakant, a Karnataka resident, said his identity was used to delete 12 voters in 14 minutes; however, he was unaware of the deletions.

HINDENBURG ROW

Sebi gives clean chit to Adani

BENN KOCHUVEEDAN @ Mumbai

MARKETS watchdog Sebi on Thursday dismissed all charges levelled by the now-shuttered US-based short-seller Hindenburg Research against the Adani group, its founder Gautam Adani, his brother, and a few top executives, including group CFO Jyeshthinder Singh.

The Hindenburg report had accused the group of share price rigging, insider trading, accounting fraud, and using offshore tax havens and shell firms to route funds.

Sebi said its probe found no violation of regulations and that there were no related-party transactions. Accordingly, the watchdog decided to "dispose of the instant proceedings against noticees (Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone, Adani Power, Adicorp Enterprises, Gautam Adani and his brother Rajesh Adani) without any direction".

Reacting, Gautam Adani said that it reaffirmed his and the group's stand that Hindenburg's claims were baseless.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Department of Information & Public Relations

GANDHI BHAGAT

VADDARSE RAGHURAMA SHETTY SOCIAL JUSTICE Journalism Award for the calendar year 2024 and ENVIRONMENT & DEVELOPMENT Journalism Awards for the calendar years 2017 to 2023

JOURNALISM AWARDS PRESENTATION PROGRAMME

Date: 19.09.2025 at 11.30 AM Venue: Sulochana Auditorium, Vartha Soudha, Bengaluru.

Inauguration & Presentation of Awards Sri Siddaramaiah Hon'ble Chief Minister	August Presence Sri D.K. Shivakumar Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister	Presided by Sri Rizwan Arshad Hon'ble MLA, Shivajinagar Assembly Constituency
Chief Guests Sri P.C. Mohan Hon'ble Member of Lok Sabha, Bengaluru Central Constituency	Sri K.V. Prabhakar Media Advisor to Hon'ble Chief Minister	Sri Ashok B. Hinchigeri Hon'ble Retd. Judge, High Court of Karnataka and Chairman, Law Commission & Chairman, Selection Committee, Vaddarse Raghurama Shetty Social Justice Journalism Award for the year 2024.

Vaddarse Raghurama Shetty

Vaddarse Raghurama Shetty, a Senior Journalist who envisioned ownership of media to the readers, started the Mungaru Newspaper, infusing revolutionary ideation to empower people. In his memory The Government of Karnataka is conferring the Vaddarse Raghurama Shetty 'Social Justice Journalism Award' through the Department of Information & Public Relations and the Environment Journalism Award & Development Journalism Award.

Sri D. Umashetty

Environment Journalism Award Recipients (2017-2023)

Vijayalakshmi Shibaruru - 2017	Vinodkumar B. Naik - 2019	Mallikarjun Hosapalya - 2022
B.M.T. Rajeev - 2018	Maltesh Angura - 2020	R. Manjunath - 2023
	Sudhir Shetty - 2021	

Development Journalism Award Recipients (2017-2023)

Chee. Ja. Rajeeva - 2017	Girish Linganna - 2019	Satish G.T. - 2022
Devaliah Guttedar - 2018	Yogesh M.N. - 2020	S. Girish Babu - 2023
	Naushad Bijapur - 2021	

All are cordially invited

Dr. Shalini Rajneesh, IAS,
Chief Secretary to the Government of Karnataka

B.B. Cauvery, IAS,
Secretary to Govt., Dept. of Information & Public Relations

Hemant M. Nimbalkar, IPS,
Commissioner, Dept. of Information & Public Relations

As enshrined in our Constitution - to safeguard public property and to
abjure violence is the fundamental duty of every citizen of India.

CMofKarnataka <https://dipr.karnataka.gov.in/>

karnataka information